

CASE STUDY

Proactive Car Wash Management Yields Major Savings



Shaping Tomorrow Today

Challenges

While preparing for the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) Consolidated Rent-A-Car Facility (ConRAC) activation, CS Operators identified several key issues, including car wash management, which could present challenges for the new site.

At various other independently-operated sites, car wash bays had chronic maintenance issues, which, combined with a lack of qualified technicians, lead to unsafe working conditions and car damage.

A primary concern at the SEA facility was that the rent-a-car companies (RACs) would continue to keep separate car wash maintenance agreements, following the models of other ConRAC sites such as Nashville, Atlanta and Kansas City.

Maximizing the Advantages of a Consolidated Facility

With more than 1.5 million vehicles expected to go through the new SEA Quick Turn-Around car washes per year, CS Operators knew that strategic changes implemented at the new SEA facility would yield significant results. CS Operators used consolidation as an opportunity to fundamentally improve operations by:

1. Providing a trained maintenance technician to minimize downtime
2. Keeping an onsite equipment inventory to reduce shipping costs
3. Combining service calls to reduce trip charges

Trained Maintenance Technician

A trained, onsite technician with access to a reliable selection of equipment repair parts significantly speeds-up the overall repair process. By hiring a dedicated, full time employee



KEEP IT UP: A well-maintained car wash is essential to achieve continuous, safe, and low cost QTA operations.

to respond to the needs of all RAC car washes, repairs can be made as soon as a problem occurs, which significantly reduces the amount of time equipment is unavailable. An in-house technician spends roughly 10-15 hours per week working on light maintenance within the car washes, which dramatically reduces the frequency of emergency service calls. Total savings in labor costs specific to the SEA ConRAC is approximately \$49,920 per year.

SAFETY AT PREVIOUS QTA:

- Unattended spills and chemical imbalances created a hazardous work environment
- Broken equipment led to unsafe work conditions with RAC employees attempting to use malfunctioning facilities or fix the machines themselves.
- Lack of preventative maintenance lead to greater instances of cars damaged by wash equipment.

“Conrac Solutions has consistently found ways to cut costs without reducing service; they have gained efficiencies, and worked to improve overall vendor effectiveness.”

- Gary Zimmerman, Avis Rent A Car

Onsite Inventory

Onsite inventory of frequently needed parts is usually not economically feasible when operating only one or two car wash bays. However, at a consolidated facility with 15 car wash bays, the procurement of spare inventory feasibly and dramatically decreases response time and shipping costs. The amount of down time saved through utilizing a shared inventory for all car washes is estimated to be 288 hours per month or 2.5% of overall operations.

In practice, this means that when a car wash become inoperable, the onsite car wash technician can pull the part needed from inventory and fix the non-functional car wash without shipping wait-time or cost burden. The replacement part can then be ordered via ground shipping instead of overnight to keep inventory

stocked. Based on usage during the first year of SEA operations, the savings of keeping a revolving inventory is estimated to be \$16,800 per year.

Combine Service Calls

While the onsite technician handles most maintenance and light repairs, circumstances arise when it is necessary to call in a specialist for warranty work and larger preventative maintenance. The Seattle market for car wash maintenance providers is limited and qualified companies have “trip charges” or surcharges for the technician to travel to the site. CS Operators knew that many car washes experience similar problems and could be serviced at the same time. With 15 car washes and centralized data, we are able to significantly reduce the overall number of trip charges through consolidation of service calls. It is estimated this approach saves the industry \$46,080 annually at the Seattle ConRAC.

**Additional Benefit:
Comprehensive Record Keeping**

Having maintenance information logged and analyzed in a consistent and centralized manner allows for identification of reoccurring issues and implementation of long-term solutions. Compared to the previous system where few RACs even kept records, the onsite technician now reviews facility-wide data and is able to work with suppliers to maximize efficiencies. For

Cost Savings for Car Wash Operations at SEA Facility

Category	Annual Savings	30-Year Savings
In-house Trained Technician	\$ 49,920	\$ 1,497,600
Onsite Inventory	\$ 16,800	\$ 504,000
Response (Trip) Charges	\$ 46,080	\$ 1,382,400
TOTAL	\$ 112,800	\$ 3,384,000

example, by working closely with car wash chemical suppliers, who use cellular tank monitoring to transmit data, the SEA ConRAC has a significantly decreased likelihood of running out of necessary chemicals, and buys only when needed. Collecting and analyzing facility-wide data adds value to every wash cycle.

Background

The Consolidated Rent-A-Car Facility in SeaTac, Washington is a Port of Seattle facility, housing operations of 13 Rent-A-Car brands.

Open to the public for full operations May 17, 2012, the facility measures 2.1 million square feet, and includes four Quick Turn-Around areas outfitted with 96 prep and fueling stations, 15 car wash bays, and six maintenance bays. It is a working environment for over 600 employees. Each of the six underground gasoline fuel storage tanks have a capacity of 20,000 gallons, with RACs utilizing an allocated number of the 96 nozzles that dispense fuel from the shared tank system.

About Conrac Solutions

Headquartered in Renton, WA, the Conrac Solutions family of companies is the only entity in the United States to have privately developed, on-airport, consolidated rent-a-car facilities (ConRACs). As developer, financial sponsor and operator of ConRACs, the company has experience in pre-development and feasibility, financing strategies, design and construction, activation, operations, asset management and capital project management. Completed projects include Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport, Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, and Bismarck Airport. ConRACs currently under contract for planning and delivery include Bradley International Airport (Hartford, CT), Newark Liberty International Airport and Reno Tahoe International Airport. For more information go to: <https://www.conracolutions.com>.

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